

UP AND JUMPING

September 2008

The Voice of the GBR Women's Volleyball Programme

Schedule of Results/Events June - August, 2008

Jun 30 GBR vs SWE
(3-0) 25-18, 25-23, 25-23
July 1 GBR vs SWE
(3-0) 25-20, 25-21, 25-19
Jul 8 GBR vs KAZ
(3-0) 25-16, 25-22, 25-23
Jul 9 GBR vs ISK (RUS)
(1-3) 23-25, 25-23, 20-25, 23-25
Jul 10 GBR vs NIG
(3-1) 25-18, 22-25, 25-19, 25-21
Jul 11 GBR vs Sichuan (CHI)
(0-3) 14-25, 20-25, 16-25
Jul 12 GBR vs IBANK (TUR)
(3-1) 25-22, 25-16, 17-25, 25-19
Jul 14-17 GBR vs PUR JR
(0-3) (1-3) (1-3) (3-1)
Jul 18-29 GBR vs DOM "A" & "B"
VS DOM 'B' (2 wins/6 losses)
VS DOM 'A' (4 losses)
Aug 18 vs Lodaga (1-3)
Aug 19 vs Lennigradka (0-3)
Aug 20 vs Lennigradka (2-3)
Aug 21 vs Lenn Development (3-2)
Sept – Break Training Again Sept 22
Oct 31 – Nov 14 GBR in Japan

GBR Ends Summer Competition

After not qualifying for the European Qualification, the month of June was training 2 X a day, since Nigeria cancelled at the last minute. Winning two matches against Sweden was a confidence builder and then it helped us to get ready for the Kazakhstan Tournament. Sweden stayed for 4 more days and helped our development players to have a focus for their training.

We left on July 5th for the President's Cup in Kazakhstan. Competition was with club teams from

China, Russia, Turkey, and the National Teams of Kazakhstan and Nigeria.

Finishing tied for 3rd, we were in every match - winning vs KAZ, TUR and NIG and very close with RUS but behind the team from China. It and showed that the hard training that we had put in, to date, was beginning to pay off.

This tournament was immediately followed with a tour of Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic. For coaches the tour was about 'bonding' and 'maturing' which only time will tell if it pays dividends. Learning that there are "no problems only solutions" was the big goal of the 25 DAY trip.

The last part of the summer competition was 4 matches in St. Petersburg (RUS), winning one vs a development squad and almost playing the match of the year vs Super League Club Leningradka. We had 3 swings to win the match in the 5th set but ending up losing a 'character' builder 17-15.

The team now has a break before returning to Sheffield on Sept 22nd for the second year of training. 'THE DRIVE IS ALIVE'

GB Talent Development Camp by "The Young Players" June 29th – July 6th 2008 Sheffield

When we first heard about this opportunity we thought it was a great chance to experience life as a professional volleyball player and to play with people from different clubs. We were a bit quiet to start off with but we got better throughout the week as we became louder and communicated more which was reflected in our performance. Our coaches, Ian Goswell and Simon Loftus were really encouraging and wouldn't accept anything that wasn't good enough. They gave us lots of technical advice on an individual and also as part of a team looking to compete against the Swedish National team at the end of the week. We arrived on Sunday night and stayed for a week, training

most days twice a day each for a couple of hours. Towards the end of the week we were able to scrimmage with the Sweden team and play two proper matches against them. In between, we had sessions with the physio in the gym doing circuits and mainly working on core stability. We also had lots of meetings with the coaches discussing how we thought training went and what we needed to work on in the next match. We discussed our individual goals and whether we had achieved them or not. We were all aiming for a position in the starting six against Sweden. We paired up with members of the GB squad and they helped us to do stats for the GB match against Sweden and to evaluate the performance. We were able to talk to the GB team and find out what their daily lives were like. It was good to see the different styles of different coaches and watch them when the GB team were playing.

We trained with 5 players from the GB who set an example for us of the effort and intensity required. The warm-ups were taken by the GB players and were the same as the National Squad. One of the best things to take away from this camp was getting to experience hanging out and training with your friends - like the centre-based players.

From Thursday to Sunday, we played matches and scrimmage games against Sweden. Talent Development players got to play amongst the GB players and some even got into the starting six. The team did really well and made progress throughout the days but Sweden managed to take the victory 3-1 each time. Even though we had a poor start, with improved confidence, the team pulled through which raised team spirit and brought a thrilling end to each game. In a very short time, the players had become a team and the age differences and range of experience presented no problems. Even if you were on-court or off-court the encouragement was at its highest level as we strived for a win.

This experience has been inspirational for all the players and has shown that no matter what age you are you still have a chance to make the team. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the camp and, hopefully, will be back in the near future. Thanks to everyone who contributed to making this camp such a huge success.

Beijing 2008 by Grace Carter, GBR

In August 2008 Maria, Audrey and I were privileged to experience the Olympics in Beijing. As part of a programme set up by the BOA; designed for athletes and coaches with the potential to be competing at the 2012 games to find out what is involved and what to expect. Best of all was to experience the atmosphere of the Olympics. We saw and learnt a lot over the 6 days we were out there, the following is just a summary of what happened.

Day 1: A 12 hour flight to Hong Kong, landed in a typhoon, so had to stay in Hong Kong that night, before setting out to Macau by boat to the GB holding camp.

Day 2: We arrived at the Westin, a luxurious hotel taken over by Team GB for about 5 weeks, used as a base for athletes to acclimatise and prepare before heading out to their competition venues. The hotel had loads of entertainment for the athletes, and 24 hour buffet service, with their own Aussie chef flown in! We had a tour around the GB training venues, and a short glimpse of what life is like for the athletes preparing for Beijing.

Day 3: A 3 hour flight to Beijing, arrived on the afternoon of the opening ceremony, we were staying in apartment blocks, just a few minutes from the Olympic stadium, which was perfect for watching the lights and firework shows of the opening ceremony. The security around the stadium was impressive, with the area going into 'lockdown' mode at around 5pm. There were literally guards for miles around the perimeters, restricting most of the movement, yet the atmosphere on the streets was still electric.

Day 4: Up at 7.30 for a busy day of volleyball ahead. We were able to see all 6 of the women's first round games. First: Italy 3, Russia 1. Both

teams looked rather uneasy using the new volleyball, which apart from its look, on closer inspection the dimpled surface seemed to be the biggest difference. Russia playing in their relatively slow but hard hitting style, were completely out-played by Italy's speed and use of combinations. Second: Serbia 3, Kazakhstan 0. Although playing similar styles of volleyball, Serbia utilized the power of their middle hitters, and Pavlova (Kaz Captain) was obviously still mentally scarred from being thrashed by GB earlier that summer! Next a bus ride to the 18,000 capacity Capital Indoor Stadium for: Brazil 3, Algeria 0. There was no contest, with Brazil playing mainly their second 6 and still looking very impressive and in control. Fourth: Cuba 3, Poland 1. Once again two contrasting styles of volleyball, the Russian-like style of the Polish were beaten by both the very high jumping and speed of the Cubans, with their captain Ruiz hitting some very impressive shots! For the evening session we were lucky enough to enter alongside Mr and Mrs Acosta (President of the FIVB) having a little chat about the team and our ambitions for 2012, a definite highlight! The stadium was almost full for: China 3, Venezuela 0. Like the Brazil game, China were in a completely different league to the Venezuelans, who had a couple of decent hitters, but not the skills and team organisation of the Chinese. The atmosphere was overwhelming for this game with the Chinese fans behind every point. The last game of the day was: USA 3, Japan 1. Once again it was the power of the Americans against the speed and unbelievable defence of the Japanese. The Chinese supporters were behind USA, their coach Lang Ping was one of the all time great Chinese volleyball players. This was the most exciting game of the day, with lots of long rallies mostly due to the amazing Japanese defence.

Day 5: Today we had a tour around the Olympic Village

from gold medalist rower Ben Hunt-Davis. We saw the apartment blocks sleeping over 10,000 athletes. The BOA set up a HQ in one of the apartment blocks with Doctor and Physio area, as well as offices for Simon Clegg and Clive Woodward. The apartment themselves were fairly bare, with a couple of bedrooms leading into a living area, the BOA shipped in sofa's and TV's to make the stay more comfortable for our athletes. The facilities on site were amazing, with everything from arcades to swimming pools, a mini hospital and TV rooms with any film on request, the village had it all! We ate in the 5,000 seat food hall, with every type of food imaginable, including a McDonalds, all open 24 hour, enjoying a bit of star spotting whilst we ate! The main impression we got from our visit to the village was the sheer amount of entertainment available, and the need to cope with the day-to-day boredom, without resulting to doing something which could ultimately hinder performance.

On a wider scale our main insight was the importance that everybody placed on GB going for gold in 2012, despite the great teams mentioned above, if GB does well in 2012, then the world will get the volleyball message!

Inspirational, educational, memorable, best birthday ever!

GBR PROGRAMME

Best wishes to the following athletes who decided not to continue in the GBR training center:
Karen Black – return to Scotland
Lauren Williams – Master's Degree
Liz Reid – Scholarship in USA
Added: Lynne Beattie – Scotland
Rachel Newton – England

Lorne Sawula, Head Coach

lorne@britishvolleyball.org

Audrey Cooper, Assistant Coach

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Team Website:

www.britishperformancevolleyball.org

**"Good, better, best
Never let it rest;
Till the good is better
And the better is best"**